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EPA Investigating Bosch over VW Diesel Cheater Software

NOVEMBER 23, 2015 AT 10:02 AM BY [MICHAEL TAYLOR](#)

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The world's biggest automotive supplier is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Justice over its role in the [Volkswagen diesel-emissions cheating scandal](#). Prosecutors have launched the investigation to find out whether Robert Bosch GmbH knew about or participated in the software-controlled cheat, which turned off emissions controls in real-world driving conditions.

A Department of Justice spokesman said they had so far found no evidence of Bosch breaking the law, but admitted the investigation was at an early stage. To bring charges against Bosch, he said, investigators would have to prove it knew Volkswagen was using its technology to cheat the U.S. (and EU) emissions tests.

While Bosch declined to comment on the investigation, it released a statement in the early stages of the scandal, insisting it only made components to the specifications delivered by automakers. "How these components are calibrated and integrated into complete vehicle systems is the responsibility of each automaker," Bosch said at the time.

Bosch's defense might be made more difficult by an admission to German Sunday newspaper, *Bild am Sonntag*, that [it warned Volkswagen eight years ago that the cheat was illegal](#).

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The paper said its sources had uncovered an internal communication between Bosch and Volkswagen, with Bosch insisting that the “defeat” code emissions test-cheating software was for test purposes and that to use it on production road cars would be against the law. Bosch nonetheless supplied Volkswagen with more than 11 million control modules fitted with the software code.

Another German Sunday newspaper, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, said one of Volkswagen’s own engineers also blew the whistle on the cheat code in a 2011 internal communication, but was ignored.

Bosch, the world’s biggest automotive supplier, refused to comment, insisting only that its communications with Volkswagen were confidential, as they were with any other car company. Bosch has insisted throughout that it was not to blame, even though it supplied the complete fuel-delivery and metering systems for treating the exhaust gases for the 2.0-liter TDI, plus its common-rail fuel-injection systems. In a statement, Bosch insisted the responsibility for configuring the system “lies with Volkswagen.”

At the heart of all the affected cars is Bosch’s EDC 16 and EDC 17 engine-control module, which also regulates the emissions clean-up on turbo-diesel engines from Fiat, Mercedes-Benz, and BMW. Each car company has its own specification and software to manage the engine’s operation, with the control module providing the base.

One car-company engineer, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, insisted Bosch had to know the code was active in production models.

“I’ve had many arguments with Bosch, and they certainly own the dataset software and let their customers tune the curves. Before each dataset is released it goes back to Bosch for its own validation.

“Bosch is involved in all the development we ever do. They insist on being present at all our physical tests and they log all their own data, so someone somewhere at Bosch will have known what was going on.

“All software routines have to go through the software verification of Bosch, and they have hundreds of milestones of verification, that’s the structure,” he said.

“The car company is *never* entitled by Bosch to do something on their own.”

- [Bosch Warned VW about Diesel Emissions Cheating in 2007](#)
- [Everything You Need to Know about the VW Diesel Emissions Scandal](#)
- [VW Diesel Emissions Scandal: Ongoing Coverage from *Car and Driver*](#)

Bosch has been at the heart of the auto industry for more than 100 years, being the first company to adopt the magneto to cars to spark the air-fuel mixture and the first to deliver a commercially practical spark plug in 1902. It also sold the world's first diesel fuel-injection system in 1927.

It employs more than 110,000 people in Germany with more than \$1 billion in annual sales and has an unusual corporate structure. It is privately held and donates its profits to charity. The Robert Bosch Foundation charity owns 92 percent of the shares in the company but has no voting rights. The Bosch family owns seven percent of the shares and has eight percent of the voting rights, while other leading industrialists own just 0.01 percent of the company and have 93 percent of the votes.

Its unusual structure sees about 95 percent of its profits plowed back into research and development, while about four percent is disbursed in charitable payments with the rest going to the Bosch family.

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Backfires

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[Add Comment](#)[Cancel](#)**SchmidtG****+1**

The USG should be careful that it doesn't give the impression of using this case for protectionist purposes...

5:01 PM on 11/24/2015

5 Replies[Reply](#)**OnkelUdo****+1**

What does United States Gypsum have to do with this. Was drywall involved and I missed it?



7:45 PM on 11/24/2015

**SchmidtG****+1**

Yes, they claimed that Bosch supplied gypsum-making technology that

exuded more rumes than was allowed by the EPA. The management was so distraught, they got plastered.

“

11:17 PM on 11/24/2015

**SchmidtG**

+0

I am thus called out, Sir. I must warn you, I was a member of the Teutonia Student Duelling Society. En Garde!

“

11:18 PM on 11/24/2015

[Load More Replies \(2 of 2\)](#)

**simul8guy**

+1

Hmmmm.... I guess the author doesn't know the difference between the EPA (as mentioned in the title of the story) and the US Justice Dept. The EPA is never mentioned in the body of the article...

9:41 AM on 11/24/2015

“

[Reply](#)

**gregg_vw**

+0

As well they should.

12:10 AM on 11/24/2015

“

[Reply](#)

**Tri D.**

+5

Let's just put it this way. Bosch did everything it could to stay legal while still wanting the sales that they knew were probably for illegal purposes.

VW: Hey Bosch, I need 11 million of those modules so I can pass emissions

Bosch: VW, these are for testing purposes ONLY! but I'll sell you 11M modules. Just promise me it's only for testing purposes.

Sounds like ebay autoparts sellers. It's ONLY FOR OFF ROAD PURPOSES!!!

Yes because we take our Civics, Camaro, etc.. off road all the time. We'll spend a few hours before and after the track uninstalling/reinstalling the parts.

In criminal court, this case would have no grounds to accuse Bosch of anything. But this is not criminal court so they may be able to get Bosch for somet

... [read more](#)

10:18 PM on 11/23/2015

“

7 Replies

[Reply](#)

**Rishi I.**

+0

I'm sure somewhere, someone's teenager has already done that; taken a Civic off-roading. 😊. Our neighbour's kid took his parents' 1yr old Civic off-roading on the boulevards when he was a teen. Now he's a firefighter.

Back to the VW thing, this will definitely stick for a bit, now that the V6 models of their TDI, i.e. 3.0L version is also afflicted by the similar cheat software. For those that think why do we need environmental protection, etc, then how is it that we have can have awesome beasts like the Dodge Hellcats and AMGs/M cars and have more power than 1960's/pre-1978 cars that didn't have catalytic converters and clean burning engines, think about it ;-). If Chrysler/Dodge can deliver compliant cars for emissions and extre

... [read more](#)

“ 4:23 AM on 11/24/2015



simul8guy



+2

Diesel engine emissions are very different from gasoline engine emissions so comparing Hellcats and TDIs is ridiculous and your Civic comment makes no sense at all....

“ 9:50 AM on 11/24/2015



Tri D.



+2

1. By off road, you mean the grass or even gravel in the back then yes. Else, that civic won't make it very far and probably get stuck in a small mud puddle before anything.
2. Diesel and gasoline are very different. Gasoline is a REFINED fuel.
3. I guarantee you that a 18L R18 Civic cannot get 26mpg if driven like a race car. More like 18mpg hopefully. Even a Prius will only get 17mpg. I have no idea what you're talking about. I grew up with Hondas, Mitsubishi, etc... I would believe it had you said a CRX.

“ 10:06 AM on 11/24/2015

[Load More Replies \(3 of 4\)](#)



Vincent Wolf



-2

VW should be banned from exporting cars to America for a period of not less than 10 years.

9:55 PM on 11/23/2015

[6 Replies](#)

“

[Reply](#)



Jon368



+1

why?

then GM, Ford, Toyota, and anything with a defective Takata airbag should as well.

“ 10:45 PM on 11/23/2015



Chet Manley



+1

What about what GM did? They essentially murdered people when they covered up the ignition switch problem

covered up the ignition switch problem.

What would you do to GM?

“

4:10 AM on 11/24/2015



Rishi T.



+1

Someone overseas is probably saying the same thing about GM, stringent fines are better and are more of deterrent than just banning/embargoing a brand. Also, criminal charges where possible, if knowingly negligent.

“

5:08 AM on 11/24/2015

[Load More Replies \(3 of 3\)](#)



Alexander Dewitt



+0

If Bosch ends up eating a huge fine would that impact supply to other manufacturers around the world?

9:50 PM on 11/23/2015

“

[Reply](#)



Jon368



+1

and the plot thickens...

9:50 PM on 11/23/2015

“

[Reply](#)



Bait83



+3

I have a feeling whatever comes out of this will blow back on VW more than it will Bosch.

Bosch already admitted to knowing about the software and issued a written warning to VW saying the defeat software was for testing only and not to be used in customer cars.

All they're are going to find is that VW ordered the ECU modules this way and then used the defeat software even after they were warned not to.

9:38 PM on 11/23/2015

[9 Replies](#)

“

[Reply](#)



wjtinfwb



+2

Agree! The US general public knows Bosch as a high-end Dishwasher, if they know the brand at all. In fact, I'm a 55 year old car and motorcycle guy, very familiar with Bosch but never knew of their ownership or financial structure. VW on the other hand, is one of the premier brands in the world. With the German engineering emphasis on control and precision, it will be very difficult for VW to pin responsibility on any external parties. The EPA however, may choose to go after both parties to send a clear message to suppliers as well as defer some blame and fines from VW and it's significant US presence and investment, which affects states, dealers and US investors.

“

10:05 PM on 11/23/2015

**Bait83**

+1

Ya, well you know how lawyers and gov't regulators work; if they smell blood they'll go in for the kill.

“

1:29 AM on 11/24/2015

**The W.**

+0

Pretty sure that's how Corporations work too. So why should the lawyers and gov't regulators that enforce our laws be any different.

VW saw a loop hole in testing that they could exploit with an illegal cheat device. And they went in for the kill.

“

1:49 AM on 11/24/2015

Load More Replies (3 of 6)**V4isnice**

+3

Even when (which is the most plausible scenario imho) it was kind of obvious to Bosch what Volkswagen was intending to do, they are not responsible for the cars that VW sells. The only one they could be liable to would be VW if they actually delivered faulty modules, which seems very unlikely.

All they could ever be punished for is not telling, and I've not yet heard about such a paragraph for economic matters ...

9:16 PM on 11/23/2015

7 Replies

“

Reply**Chet Manley**

+0

And that gets complicated. Most of Bosch's potential liability will be under German and EU laws. And I have no idea how that applies to a situation like this. Its generally harder to sue in most countries compared to the US.

So I guess we have to wait and see.

“

4:19 AM on 11/24/2015

**michael p.**

+2

It's the ambulance chaser's dream. Joint and several liability, etc. Let's sue the gun maker for the criminal's behavior, and so on. I'm waiting for the ad agencies to file suit. Or maybe they will be sued. Or maybe Bosch can sue VW. Are the tire makers innocent in all this? Can VW sue Bosch? If they can, they will. Before this is over, there's going to be a lot of lawyers with enough money to afford nice new high line Audis and Porsches. Hell, the way this is going, after their take they might be even able to afford a Lambo, or even a used Veyron. What will VW owners get? A "fixed" car returning less mpg and HP, plus a prepaid Visa card good at the VW accessory store.

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[read more](#)

“

4:06 PM on 11/24/2015



simul8guy



+1

Something tells me there will be some detailed news with respect to the emissions scandal breaking after the 1st of the year. Until then everything is just speculation.

“


6:10 PM on 11/24/2015

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